

## ABSTRACT

Isolated nucleic acids are provided that encode human neutral sphingomyelinase (N-SMase) and N-SMase fragments and derivatives capable of hybridizing to such N-SMase-encoding nucleic acids. The invention also includes isolated recombinant human neutral sphingomyelinase (N-SMase) and N-SMase fragments and derivatives are also provided. Novel assays are also provided to identify compounds useful in the diagnosis or treatment of human neutral sphingomyelinase related disorders.

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